"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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ONLY A BUSINESS MAN.

BY MAY DRYDEN.

CHAPTER XV.

PHŒBE'S mind had been very much unsettled by the new friendship she had made; for her acquaintance with Gordon and Clarence soon developed into what promised to be a real and lasting friendship. She was bewildered and almost dazed by the new lights that poured in upon her. She did not flag in her work—did not neglect any of her daily duties; she even performed them with an added zeal and cheerfulness; but they were to her no longer the one object of her existence. She began to have some perception of a life outside them, a comforting feeling that for her, too, as well as for other girls, pleasant things might happen. It was a wonderfully sustaining thought to her that, however trying to the temper and spirits home-worries might be, there was another home where she was always welcome, and where, for her at least, there were no worries at all. Not that Phœbe often availed herself of the hearty invitation Clarence had given her to consider herself free of the Holme. She had not time to spare for frequent visits, even to so kind a friend; but she knew that Clarence would be truly glad to see her whenever she did go, and Clarence rarely let a week pass without coming to see her, always staying with her an hour or two, and helping and petting her as she had never been helped or petted before. It was something quite new to her to be an object of solicitude to anyone but Luke and Matty, and she enjoyed the sensation with her whole heart.

As for Matilda, she had, from the first, asserted that "she had no time to put on company manners for anyone," and soon fell into the habit of treating Clarence as she did Phœbe, with an affectionate assumption of superior wisdom which infinitely amused both the elder girls. Phœbe began to find that she really could be amused now; she had hardly thought it possible before she knew Clarence.

Even Mrs. Carfield fell a victim to Clarence's charms. For her friend's sake the kind-hearted girl conciliated the peevish invalid, listening silently and pitifully to her long and wearisome complaints. She very soon learned to feel really sorry for the unhappy woman. She was so bright, and strong, and full of life herself, that it seemed to her simply dreadful that anyone should exist in a state of continual feebleness and fretfulness. Besides which she could not help grieving for anyone whose affections and hopes were centred on a youth so sure to disappoint them as Daniel. The more she saw of Phœbe's poetical brother, the less she liked him. His unmanly nature, his weak character, his morbid egotism and sentimentalism, were all alike repugnant to a mind whose strongest characteristics were strength and unselfishness. She was worried and distressed by his too evident admiration of her, more especially because she saw how anxious it made Phœbe and Luke. Daniel, in his blind self-conceit, would not see how distasteful his company was to her, and was plunging every day more deeply into love with her.

Meantime poor Netta Heard watched his affection with a growing pain which was rapidly telling upon her health. Could she have persuaded herself that Daniel's fickleness was a fault she would have been far happier, but it seemed to her that it was an easier thing to believe herself unworthy of his love than to admit a flaw in

the character of her hero. She grieved for him even more deeply than for herself, for her keen perception showed her what Daniel would never see unless told so in plain language—that Clarence Fenchurch did not care for him in the least. She shared the general attraction towards Clarence, but marvelled greatly at her insensibility and hardness of heart. Poor Netta could not understand how any girl could be blind to the perfection of her poet cousin, and wept in secret over the cruelty which must sooner or later condemn him to the misery of a lifelong sorrow. Sometimes she laid plans for bringing Clarence and her cousin together, her imagination sketching a scene wherein, exercising a wonderful power of persuasion, she should open Clarence's eyes to Daniel's virtues, lead her to him, see them exchange their first embrace, and then go home, contented, and die. Death for herself was the end of all her imagined schemes at present. She would die and be buried under a grassy, daisied mound, without any tombstone to tell who reposed there, and Daniel and Clarence should visit her grave and lay fresh flowers on it, standing hand-in-hand to look at it nd saying, "She died for us."

Poor Netta! Foolish, romantic, little body that she was, there was, in spite of her folly, something very touching in her devotion to her cousin, and it was not wonderful that, when time after time she left the Carfields' house, looking more weary and sad than when she entered it, Luke should clench his hand, and set his teeth, and tell Phœbe he should like to shake that young rascal until he had shaken all his nonsense out of him. Netta's distress troubled Phœbe very greatly, the more so that she felt herself quite powerless to comfort her. It was when musing over this trouble one day, that she looked so grave and sober that Clarence said to her:

"I only came to Wilton just in time for you, Phœbe. Another year and you would have been a confirmed old woman. Now I have some hope that, with time and patience, I may develop you backwards into a young person."

"Did you ever plant a daisy the wrong way up, that it might come up a different colour?" said Phœbe. "I am like such a daisy, I think. All my ideas are turned topsy-turvy, and I can feel my colour changing already. The process is not unpleasant, only it is very upsetting, you know. And I am haunted by a kind of feeling that I am not doing right."

The girls were sitting at the window darning socks, and, as she spoke, Phœbe drew a fresh one over her hand and sighed.

"Why do you sigh?" said Clarence. "Do not be afraid. Depend upon it, we are meant to take such happiness as comes in our way. Do you imagine you will be a less useful member of society because life looks bright and pleasant to you? Will you lay the threads of worsted one whit less regularly across that big hole, because you and Luke took such a pleasant walk with Gordon and me last Sunday afternoon?"

"Your brother lent me a volume of Carlyle the other day. He says we ought not to care about being happy."

"Yes; but he never said we were to care about being miserable. He means we are not to strive after happiness. When did you ever do that, little bee?"

"Of course you are quite right," said Matty decidedly. "As for me, it does not take much to make me happy. Only give me the kitchen to myself and plenty of cooking to do, and I am quite content. But for you, Phœbe, it is different; you shall be a full-blown, double pink daisy, one of these days, and then someone will come along and transplant you, and quite proper, too."

"She is a pink daisy now," laughed Clarence. "Matty, your words must have gone home; our daisy knows more about the gardener who is coming than you do."

Matty looked sharply and suspiciously at Phœbe's glowing cheeks, and said:

"Of course I was only jesting. Phœbe is far too young to think of anything of that sort yet."

With which grandmotherly speech she retired to the kitchen, disregarding the laughter that followed her, and feeling quite secure in her own mind that she had put a stop to the matter for the present.

"Daisy? Was that what you called her, Clarence?" said a voice at the window.

The girls started, and Phœbe blushed more deeply than before, for there leant Gordon, with his arms folded on the window-sill.

"Did you call Miss Carfield Daisy?" he repeated.

"Yes; why not? Is it not a pretty name?"

"Unsuitable. I know a much better one."

"Do you? But first tell me what you

are doing here at this time of day. I thought you were gone to see Everett and would not be back for ever so long. I am not ready to come home yet, and nobody asked you to come to tea here."

"Indeed but somebody did. I met Carfield and he brought me home. There he is to answer for himself;" then, as Luke entered the room: "Carfield, did you not ask me to come to tea?"

"Who disputes it?" said Luke.

"My sister here, who is quite sorry to see me."

"Never mind. Phœbe and I will make you welcome; will we not, little woman?"

Phœbe smiled and nodded, and Gordon said slowly:

"I wonder what I should do if you would not. Retire into my hermit's shell again, I suppose. Do you know, Mistress Phœbe, you and your brother are the very first friends I have ever made."

"Are we?" said Phœbe gently. "I wonder at that. I should have thought you were a man to make friends easily."

"No; there are very few people who know me in any but my business capacity. Do you know what they call me in town, Mistress Phœbe? They call me money-grubber."

"Gordon, be quiet!" said Clarence, looking at him anxiously. "You have been to see Everett, then, to-day after all?"

"Yes. Come, Miss Carfield, tell me if you think I look as a man should do who cares for nothing in the world but money?"

"Don't answer him, Phœbe," said Clarence. "Do not encourage him to be morbid."

Indeed, Phœbe would have found it hard to answer him at that moment; so great was her pity for him that she felt a suspicious tightening at the throat, and had much trouble to squeeze back the tears from her downcast eyes.

Clarence went on speaking:

"Gordon, tell me now what name it was you thought would be so much more appropriate to Phœbe than Daisy."

"Heartsease," said Gordon gravely. "Do you not agree with me, Carfield?"

"Yes, indeed," said Luke heartily. "She has been my Heartsease ever since she was so high," putting his hand on the window-sill.

"I came on business," said Gordon, changing the conversation abruptly. "We are going to start a library for our mill-hands down in the hollow. I have built a suitable room near the cottages, and now I want to buy the books."

"Gordon," exclaimed Clarence anxiously, "I thought you had made up your mind to give that up for the present—that we could not afford it."

"We must give up something else, dear, and afford that. I would have waited a while, but I find that in a rash moment I spoke of it to one of the hands, made the young fellow a kind of promise, and I cannot go back from my word. We'll economise some other way, and bring things straight."

Phœbe listened anxiously. She knew they were rich, this brother and sister, and she knew that the local gossips said they were mean and grasping. Was there any truth in the rumour? Why should they be restricted now in their plans for want of a little money? Much as she reproached herself for doubting them for a moment, she longed to be convinced that they were all she wished them to be, to have their fair fame established beyond a doubt.

Gordon saw her look of pain.

"Come," said he gaily, "I did not come down here to put more wrinkles on your grave little brow. You are too sensitive, Mistress Phœbe. Do you mind my calling you Mistress Phœbe?"

Phœbe told him gravely, "No." She could not say that every gentle word he spoke to her gave her a thrill of delight, that she loved to be singled out by him, even by a pet name that he alone called her.

"Let's proceed to business, then," said Gordon. "We are going to have three hundred volumes to start our library with, and I want you and your brother to help us."

"My dear fellow," said Luke, "you could hardly come to two worse people to help you in such a matter. Phœbe and I have so little time for reading."

"I expect you will prove to have read more sensible books than any young people of my acquaintance."

"Then," said Phœbe brightly, "I am afraid your expectations will be disappointed. But it will be nice to know what books you choose; so, if you like, we will form ourselves into a committee after tea, as soon as I've put Bunyan to bed. You will let me bring my sewing to the meeting, will you not?"

It was a great treat for Phœbe, but Gordon and Clarence would have done their work more expeditiously if they had done it alone. Clarence it was who did most of the choosing. She had read more

than any of them, and they were betrayed into so much pleasant conversation, as one book after another was named and discussed, that not more than fifty had been selected when ten o'clock struck, and Clarence rose to put on her hat. Then Phœbe, who had been very quiet all the evening, ventured to make a suggestion.

"These books are for the hands, are they not? Would it not be well to consult one of them before you choose them all?"

"Aye, that is a capital idea, Mistress Phœbe. But whom? If I asked Farmworth, he would say bound volumes of the Sporting News. If I asked Jones, he would suggest a book on the treatment of dogs; and if I consulted old Isaac Leighton, he would not be able to name anything but the Cottage Gardener's Dictionary."

"I dare say," cried Clarence; "but Deborah would be able to help us. Were you not thinking of her, Phœbe?"

"Yes. Would she not enjoy it very much? She seemed so happy to have some rational conversation at your tea-party the other day."

"It is the very thing, and I am much obliged to you for thinking of it," said Gordon warmly. "We will ask her to come to our next committee meeting. When can you come to our house to tea, Mistress Phœbe, and help us to choose the rest of the books?"

"I am afraid I cannot come to tea any evening, but I might come at about half-past seven, if that will do; will it?"

"It must, I suppose," said Clarence discontentedly; "but it would be much cosier if you could have tea with us. Do be a naughty girl for once, Phœbe dear, and leave Matty to put the boy to bed."

"No, that would never do. Matty would do it directly if I asked her, but she has her hands full already. Besides, Bunyan worries her; she never can make him go to sleep."

"Well, then, come next Wednesday, as early as you can. We must make the most of what we can get of you, and be content."

"Gordon," said Clarence, as they walked home that evening, "what makes you mention Everett's absurd talk to Phœbe? Why should she know anything about it?"

"I do not know, dear," said Gordon, with a sadder intonation than ever in his low, sweet voice; "but, when I am with her, I feel impelled to tell her all about myself. Do you think she would judge me very hardly if she knew all?"

AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS.

THE history of the Newspaper Press of America is a bulky one. It covers between four and five hundred of the large quarto pages of the official volumes of the reports of the United States Census Commissioners. By "boiling down" this huge mass of official facts and figures, we propose to give our readers a brief account of a sufficiently interesting subject.

Although the first English printed book bears the date of 1471, it is said that a printing-press existed in Mexico as early as 1540. Indeed, there is reason to suppose that a printing-press was sent across the Atlantic some years previous to that date, for there are records, whether authentic or not we are unable to say, of a book printed in Mexico in 1535. Between that year and 1600, at any rate, some ninety-three books are known to have been printed in Mexico, and some seven in Peru, principally on religious subjects. In Mexico, also, the germ of a newspaper appeared first on the American continent, for "gazettes" seem to have been regularly published there before the end of the seventeenth century. What were the literary characteristics of these early specimens we know not, but they cannot have been of a high order, for the Gazette de Mexico, as late as 1730, consisted almost entirely of "accounts of religious functions, descriptions of processions, consecrations of churches, beatifications of saints, festivals, and auto da fés," while civil and commercial affairs, and all the news from Europe, occupied but a small corner.

In that portion of America now known to us as the United States, the first printing-press was established about 1639. This was in Salem, Massachusetts, and the first book printed there was called The Freeman's Oath, the second or third being The Psalms in Metre, Faithfully Translated for the Use, Edification, and Comfort of the Saints in Publick and Private, especially in New England. There are American books of earlier date, but they were sent in MS. to England to be printed. There was not much demand, however, among the colonists for any kind of books wherever printed, and it is interesting to note that the first regular bookseller, by name Hezekiah Usher, did not appear until 1652. Even in Virginia, where the colonists were of a superior and even, for

those days, a cultured class, there was no printing-press before 1681.

The first American newspaper was established about 1705, and during the next thirty years many others were established, but all under the censorship of the Royal Governors of the several colonies. In the year 1735 began the first struggle for the freedom of the press, when the publisher of the New York Gazette was tried for publishing "false, scandalous, and malicious libels against the Government." The jury refused to bring in a verdict of guilty, notwithstanding the pressure employed by the Government; but although a measure of freedom was thus obtained, there was still for long after a close and jealous supervision. Twenty years after the trial just mentioned, the Principal of the College of Pennsylvania was imprisoned for six months for publishing a pamphlet reflecting on the Government; and still later, in 1769, a General McDougall, of New York, was imprisoned for a similar offence. There are many other instances on record of the severity with which the Colonial Governments dealt with printers, authors, and publishers who dared to discuss politics and criticise officialism.

The famous Stamp Act of 1765 operated very severely upon the Colonial press—so much so that a large number of the journals had to suspend. A few proprietors put their journals into mourning, while others published without titles, in the hope of evading the tax.

Some went on printing and publishing and ignored the Act, accepting all risks of defiance of the law, and thus exhibiting the first definite example of rebellion against the oppressive rule of the Crown, which afterwards developed to such great issues. It is a curious fact, nevertheless, that all the early American newspapers were principally filled with Transatlantic news. The readers seemed to care—for we may assume that editors then as now provided that which the tastes of their supporters demanded—far less to hear of what was going on at their own doors, than of the sayings and doings of the Old World. Hence they knew a great deal more about English and European politics than they did about the affairs of their fellows in the neighbouring colonies.

All this, however, rapidly changed as events ripened towards the great revolution. Then the Colonies began to realise that their interest and their cause were one, and that the most powerful influence they could employ to mould and guide public opinion was the press, and especially the newspaper press. But political excitement alone will not make a newspaper flourish; and as the art of advertising was yet in its infancy, a great number of the journals called into existence by the war collapsed for want of pecuniary support when peace ensued. Printing and paper were excessively dear, and the business of a printer was regarded as a poor one even in Benjamin Franklin's day. Franklin himself did not give all his time to his printing-office, but acted as a Government clerk, and then as a postmaster, to eke out his livelihood. When Franklin established his newspaper in Philadelphia there was only one journal in the city, which that remarkable scientist and statesman contemptuously designated "a paltry thing, wretchedly managed." Yet the printer and publisher of this "paltry thing" was rich, and made his money out of a general printing business as well as out of his newspaper; so there were exceptions to the general poverty of the trade.

To turn back a little: we find the first newspaper published in Boston, in 1690. It was called, Public Occurrences, both Foreign and Domestick; but for all the brave show of its title, it never reached a second number. It was suppressed by the authorities of Massachusetts, and the only copy now known to exist is in the State-Paper Office, London.

The second newspaper established was in 1696. It was in the form of an official gazette, chiefly a republication of English official papers, and it was issued under the orders of the Governor of New York.

The first Boston paper above-mentioned was printed on three pages of a folded sheet, each page measuring seven by eleven inches, with two columns, while one page was left blank. The publisher's prospectus is a literary and historical curiosity, and deserves to be here transcribed. It ran: "It is designed that the Countrey shall be furnished once a month (or if any Glut of Occurrences happen, oftener) with an account of such considerable things as have arrived unto our Notice. In order hereunto, the Publisher will take what pains he can to obtain a Faithful Relation of all such things, and will particularly make himself beholden to such persons in Boston whom he knows to have been, for their own use, the diligent Observers of such matters. That which is herein proposed is, First, That Memorable Occurrents of

Divine Providence may not be neglected or forgotten, as they too often are. Secondly, That people everywhere may better understand the Circumstances of Publique Affairs, both abroad and at home: which may not only direct their Thoughts at all times, but at some times also to assist their Business and Negociations. Thirdly, that something may be done toward the Curing, or at least the Charming of the Spirit of Lying which prevails among us, wherefore nothing shall be entered but what we have reason to believe is true, repairing to the best fountains for our Information. And when there appears any material mistake in anything that is collected, it shall be corrected in the next. Moreover the Publisher of these Occurrences is willing to engage, that whereas there are many False Reports maliciously made and spread among us, if any well-minded person will be at the pains to trace any such false Report, so as to find out and Convict the First Raiser of it, we will in this paper (unless just Advice be given to the contrary) expose the name of such person as A malicious Raiser of a False Report. It is supposed that none will dislike this Proposal but such as intend to be guilty of so villanous a Crime."

The admirable sentiments here disclosed are worthy the attention of even modern newspaper conductors. They entitled the exponent to a better fate, for the pious belief expressed in the last sentence proved ill-founded. The paper was suppressed, as we have said, and upon the ground that the repeal of the Star Chamber edicts of 1637 did not extend to the Colonies, where, therefore, no man not authorised by the Crown had a right to publish political news. It is consolatory to learn that the enterprising and high-minded printer, who was thus summarily "sat upon," was, two years later, appointed printer to the Governor and Council, and in that capacity for some years printed the Acts and Laws of the Colony of Massachusetts.

If we set aside the New York Gazette as hardly entitled to be called a newspaper, the second American journal was the Boston News Letter, published in 1704 "by authority," and edited by one John Campbell, then postmaster of Boston. It was composed almost, if not entirely, of the news letters which Campbell, in his official capacity as postmaster, had to prepare and send regularly to the Governors of the several provinces.

As the postmasters of those times were the official collectors, as well as the transmitters, of news, it came to be regarded as the correct thing for a postmaster to "run" a newspaper. So we find four postmasters of Boston in succession carrying on this journalistic work. In New Haven, in Providence, in New York, and in other places, the same thing was done.

The publisher of the Philadelphia paper which excited Benjamin Franklin's contempt and competition, was at one time postmaster of the city, and this gave him so much advantage in obtaining his news, as well as in distributing his papers, that Franklin had to take to bribing the "riders," or mail-carriers, to help him. Franklin "thought so meanly of the practice" of his opponent in this matter, "that when I afterwards came into the position"—of postmaster—"I took care never to imitate it."

The New England Courant was the fourth paper which had been tried in Boston, and its first appearance was on 7th August, 1721. The printer and publisher was James Franklin, who had formerly done the printing of Campbell's News Letter. It seems to have been the first pioneer of newspaper warfare, for it began by attacking the News Letter, the Government, the local officials, and even private individuals in a manner as independent as it was novel. Then it got into a tremendous controversy with the clergy on the subject of vaccination—the clergy being for, and the Courant against, inoculation. This continued for a year or so, when an Order in Council commanded "James Franklin" to desist from publishing the Courant, or any other paper, except under the supervision of the Secretary of the Province. But the paper came out all the same, the name of Benjamin being substituted for that of James as publisher, and thus it continued for several years more, until it was finally suspended. The incident of the Boston Courant is memorable in respect, first, of its being a new departure in journalism in America—setting a new fashion and opening up a wider and larger field—and second, because of the association with it of the famous name of Franklin. It does not appear, however, that Benjamin did much more than lend his name to the paper, for he must have settled in Philadelphia, where he went in his twenty-first year, while the Courant was still in existence. But the vigour and originality which characterised

the Boston Courant soon appeared in the Pennsylvania Gazette. This was the title of the paper established by Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia, in 1729, on the bones of a struggling enterprise bearing the pompous designation of The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences, and Pennsylvania Gazette. After a time Franklin made this paper a power in the land, and it was the organ and mouthpiece of the revolutionary cause until, in 1777, it was suppressed during the British occupation of Philadelphia. It reappeared, and was one of the most valuable newspaper properties in the country down to 1824, and Franklin, who retired from its active management when he took up statesmanship, drew one thousand pounds per annum for many years from his successor, in lieu of profits.

The journals thus far mentioned were either monthly, weekly, or bi-weekly, and not until 1784 was the first daily newspaper established in the United States. This was Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, the successor of the Pennyslvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser, which Franklin opposed in Philadelphia. Latterly the journal was issued three times a week, until it faded into the Daily American. The first daily paper published in New York was The Argus, or Greenleaf's New Daily Advertiser, in 1787.

Between the date of the establishment of Campbell's newspaper above referred to, and the commencement of the revolt against England, altogether seventy-eight journals had been started in the American colonies, and thirty-nine were actually in existence when the War of Independence began. The population of the several Colonies was then only about three millions, and the circulation of each of the journals was very small. That of the Massachusetts papers, for instance, did not exceed about six hundred copies of each issue, and, besides, subscribers had a curious and awkward habit of stopping their subscriptions during the winter-time—why we know not, unless coals were dear, and literature was esteemed a luxury, to be cut off when economy was necessary.

As the ties of England were thrown off newspapers multiplied rapidly, for, as the States were organised and constitutions formulated, the freedom of the press was recognised as an indispensable part of the institutions of a free country. The Federal Constitution of the Union, however, has no law on the subject as it has none establishing freedom of speech or a national religion. But for some time after the Revolution, newspapers continued an uncertain and unattractive enterprise from a pecuniary point of view, until with peace came the gradual growth of parties, and the whole network of State and Federal politics. How they grew may be gathered from the fact that the census of 1840 returned one thousand four hundred and three newspapers and journals in active circulation.

It is since 1840, however, that the real development of the press of the United States has been, and the pace has been fully commensurate with the development of the country. It is now one of the best organised, best equipped, and most remunerative branches of business in that most business-like land. It is alike the feeder and the nursling of industry, the cause and the effect of the spread of education, the stimulus and the product of stupendous efforts to promote inter-communication. Tested merely as a form of industry, the saleable value of all the newspapers and journals current in 1880 was estimated at nearly twenty-two millions sterling.

In that year the number of periodical publications in the United States reported by the census enumerators was eleven thousand three hundred and fourteen. Of these nine hundred and seventy-one were daily newspapers; eight thousand six hundred and thirty-three were weekly newspapers (including eight hundred and four weekly editions of daily journals); one hundred and thirty-three were semi-weekly newspapers (of which forty-one were connected with dailies); seventy-three were tri-weeklies (including forty-one connected with dailies); forty were bi-weekly publications; one thousand one hundred and sixty-seven were monthly periodicals; one hundred and sixty were semi-monthly; two were tri-monthly; thirteen were bi-monthly; one hundred and sixteen were quarterly; and six were semi-annual periodicals.

Defining a newspaper as a publication devoted to "news, politics, and family reading," the enumerators divide the above list into eight thousand eight hundred and sixty-three newspapers, and two thousand four hundred and fifty-one periodicals. Of the latter class we find five hundred and fifty-three returned as religious; one hundred and seventy-three agricultural; two hundred and eighty-four commercial; twenty-five financial; fifty-four insurance

and railways; one hundred and eighty-nine general literature, including not only all the magazines and reviews, but also the weekly "story-papers"; one hundred and fourteen medical and surgical; forty-five law; forty-eight science and mechanics; one hundred and forty-nine temperance, Freemasons, and Oddfellows, and other organs of organisations; two hundred and forty-eight educational; seventy-two art, music, and fashions; two hundred and seventeen children's papers; and two hundred and sixty miscellaneous. There were four hundred and eighty-one illustrated papers which are included in one or other of the classes, as are also all the journals published in foreign languages.

It is very interesting to trace the comparative rate of increase in newspapers as revealed by the various censuses since 1840. Thus from 1850 to 1860 the increase was 60·37 per cent.; between 1860 and 1870, 44·93 per cent.; and between 1870 and 1880, nearly 100 per cent. The most remarkable increase was in the number of weekly newspapers.

These figures, however, do not show all the newspapers which have been started and suspended after a longer or shorter term of life. The average longevity of journals in the United States is much shorter than that of Great Britain, although above that of the Continental press. Of the vast total of American journals, there are only three hundred and seventy which have been in existence for fifty years.

There is considerable contention for the honour of being the acknowledged oldest living American newspaper. There are some four or five which trace their origin in direct line from the "fifties" of last century, but there seems to have been a temporary suspension, from one cause or another, in the case of each, except in that of the Hartford Courant. This was established in Connecticut in 1764, and has been continued without interruption or change of name until now. The Maryland Gazette was established some years earlier, viz., in 1745, but was suspended, and re-started in 1839. The Connecticut paper, therefore, appears to be the true patriarch of the American press.

Mr. Horace Greeley, himself the owner and editor of a newspaper in New York, stated in evidence before a Committee of our own House of Commons, in 1851, that fifteen thousand was the general average population of a town which started a newspaper in the Union, but that every town of twenty thousand inhabitants would certainly have two newspapers at least. From the census of 1880, however, we find that one thousand nine hundred and seventy-one daily papers were published in only three hundred and eighty-nine towns, thus giving an average of two and a half papers to each. One of these towns was Elko, in Nevada, whose population was only seven hundred and fifty-two, and another was Tombstone, in Arizona, which last city had actually two daily papers. The town of Eureka, in California, had three dailies for a population of two thousand six hundred and thirty-nine, and the town of Red Bluff, two for a population of two thousand one hundred and six. Another Nevada town, Winnemucca, with only seven hundred and sixty-three inhabitants, had a daily paper all to itself. This is illustrative of what is claimed as a peculiar characteristic of the American press—its localisation. Every hamlet has its mouthpiece through the printing-press, and every city is independent of every other city for its daily news supply. In this fact, it is claimed, is met "the first condition of a healthy and progressive national journalism, and this it is that makes and will preserve the American press as the freest, the most self-reliant, the most loyal to home and vicinity interest in the world."

These remarks, we must explain, are those of the Census Commissioners, and do not, by any means, embody our own views. The disposition to "vicinity interest" has bred that inclination to personalities and private "spice," which we regard as the greatest defect of the American press, and as indicative rather of license than of liberty.

The figures referring to circulation are interesting. The total number of copies of daily papers printed in the United States, in 1880, was more than eleven hundred millions; and, adding to this the weeklies, monthlies, quarterlies, etc., we find a grand total of periodicals of more than two thousand millions. It is almost impossible to grasp these figures; but it will be noted that daily newspapers represent more than one half of the entire circulation of periodicals. Comparing the circulation with the population it will be found that there are enough newspapers printed every year to supply every person of a reading age with a journal at least once a week. But of course all adults even cannot read, and all persons who can read, do not.

The capital invested in newspapers in the United States, in 1880, was computed at about ten and a half millions sterling; the number of hands employed was over sixty-five thousand, and the amount paid in wages was little short of six millions sterling.

AT TATTERSALL'S.

A CURIOUS mixture of associated ideas is called forth by the mention of Tattersall's. To one it means the chief temple of the turf, the Royal Exchange of the betting world, the Capel Court of speculators in racing stock and in the chances of the course. But Tattersall's has many visitors and familiars who have never taken or laid the odds; whose only notion of the field is of a grassy enclosure; for whom "bar one" is foolishness, while "P.P." suggests only "practical piety." Thus, Mrs. Proudie, in all her stiff brocades —nay, the Bishop himself, even, may be seen at Tattersall's, looking out for a match-horse for the episcopal barouche, or, perhaps, for a clever, handsome cob to carry his lordship in the Park; while for those—and their name is legion—who love horses, and to ride and drive them, without much interest in the mysteries of the racing world, the name of Tattersall is a household word, and the reality itself—the great horse-selling depôt by Albert Gate—an accustomed and frequent haunt.

There are many frequenters of Tattersall's who, like faithful Mahommedans, date from the Hegira—the departure, that is, from the old premises, which, for well nigh a century, had been the central hub of the universe of sport—the well-known "Corner," to which old turfites often recur with loving regret. Things were somehow different in the days of the old Corner: horses were stouter; races were more gamely contested, betting was more generous, and racing a noble sport rather than a commercial speculation. According to such people, all things altered for the worse when Tattersall's moved a step or two westwards. Commercial depression, failure of crops, shortness of cash, and suspension of credit —all these things have followed in doleful train since Messrs. Tattersall led the way from St. George's to Knightsbridge—little more than a quarter of a mile, you will say; but, then, Meccah is not very far from Medina, and yet what momentous consequences ensued from that trifling pilgrimage, the end of which is not yet fully worked out.

But if some traveller who had been interned among the wilds of Africa for twenty years or so were to return, and look for Tattersall's in the once familiar spot, he would find it difficult to verify the site even where it once existed. What changes are these? the bewildered tourist would exclaim. Where is the Duke on his charger? Where is Decimus Burton's arch? The arch is there, indeed, a second glance would tell him, but set in quite a different direction from where it once stood facing the archway entrance to Hyde Park. Indeed, the whole aspect of the Corner, with its open space and green lawns, is so different from what it once was that it requires a glance at the sturdy brick wall of Buckingham Palace Gardens—a glance, too, at the hospital, which still holds its ground—to assure the wanderer that, after all, nothing very revolutionary has occurred, and that things are much as they used to be twenty years ago.

Like most of our favourite institutions, Tattersall's is rather the result of growth and accretion than of definite prearranged plan. It has broadened out, so to say, from the simple mart of horses of its founder to the present highly organised establishment. The death of the first Tattersall is recorded in the Gentleman's Magazine obituary—"20th April, 1795, at his house, at Hyde Park Corner, Mr. Tattersall, an eminent horse-dealer"—and the notice goes on to commemorate, most justly by all accounts, the kindheartedness and benevolence which had distinguished the deceased. Indeed, the portrait of Richard Tattersall still possessed by the firm, and engraved in Knight's London, shows a sensible face, with a shade of melancholy about it, while the broad, low-crowned hat, long waistcoat, and wide-flapped coat are characteristic of the period. The veteran's hand rests upon the Stud Book, as if, like his brother autocrat the great Peter, he were laying down for his descendants the policy that should govern their future efforts, and this policy has been faithfully adhered to. For while the great sales of blood-stock have nearly always been conducted under the hammer of one of the firm, yet as a rule the records of the turf will show that they have been little concerned either in running horses or betting upon them. And yet it is true that the fortunes of the house were first established by a racehorse. The celebrated Highflyer,

which was bought by Tattersall for two thousand five hundred guineas, proved so profitable on the course, and in the stud, that its possessor was able to purchase a comfortable estate in his native county. In gratitude to the noble animal, Tattersall gave the name of Highflyer Hall to the house he built for himself on the property, and the inscription, "Highflyer not to be sold," on one of the family portraits, denotes how the latter days of the grand old horse were spent in the happy ease of a country paddock.

Tattersall's sales soon became so popular, that nearly all the world was to be found at the Corner, including owners of horses, and those who wanted to hear the latest news of favourite racers. The fine gentlemen and handsome women who still live for us on the canvasses of Reynolds and Gainsborough were there, walking about in laced coats and ruffles, and in the soft tissues and Indian muslins which had replaced the stately silks and brocades of former days. It was even at an epoch when there was no Derby Day. The Suffolk baronet, Sir Charles Bunbury, had not yet scored the first win of the first Derby on Epsom course, while the lord of Knowsley was still one of the pillars of the turf, and from his pleasant racing seat at the Oaks secured that wonderful double event in racing nomenclature—the naming of the two most popular races of the year. The handsome face and curly head of the young Prince of Wales, full of life and promise, were often to be seen at Tattersall's with Colonel O'Kelly, from Clerkenwell, the owner of the great Eclipse, the wonder of all time. Astley was then in full swing, witching the world with noble horsemanship. It was a time when many things were beginning that have gone on flourishing into our own days, and when, on the other hand, many things were coming to an inevitable end.

The turf shared in the revolutionary movements of the age. From being the exclusive sport of Princes, and nobles, and squires of high degree, who raced for whips and belts, and ran matches, or now and then a sweepstakes over Newmarket Heath, racing was fast becoming popular, and with the spirit and enterprise that the new blood had introduced, betting assumed a new and increasing importance. But it was only incidentally, and outside their regular business, that Tattersall's became the centre of turf speculation. The betting that went on among the regular frequenters of the mart attracted a numerous company of speculators, and for the sake of order and regularity a room was set aside for betting, and admission confined strictly to members, who paid a certain subscription. Presently a committee was appointed to manage the affairs of the club, as the affair had now virtually become, and although it has never been attempted to exclude any on account of social status, yet there is a tolerably strict financial supervision, and the default to pay a bet involves suspension from the privileges of the rooms, and at the same time excludes from all the rings and enclosures under the control of the Jockey Club.

It is but a short walk from Hyde Park Corner to the present Tattersall's, and all the way along one cannot help marvelling at the rapid transformation of a district which twenty years ago was rather of the lodging-house and cookshop order of architecture to a region of wealth and fashion. Even some of the old-fashioned houses that used to have cards in the windows—Apartments, or Drawing-room Floor To Let, Furnished—are now brightened up into spruce abodes of fashion; and where the scrubby laurels used to shed their leaves, are now encaustic fountains and marvellous displays of flowers, where splendid footmen bask, and coroneted carriages dash up to the gates. But the Brompton Road is still unchanged—quite a refreshing compound of ordinary jolly, vulgar existence among all this display, with its brokers' shops and greengrocers, its newsvendors and universal oilmen. You can hardly have passed by here—say from Hyde Park Corner to the Albert Hall—without wondering at the sight of the rows of quasi-palaces pettering out, and the grand highway that might well be the route of princes, forking suddenly into a pair of commonplace and narrow streets, with a sharp corner between, occupied by premises of a very humble type. That corner, by the way, is now fast disappearing; the shanties which occupied the angle have either been pulled down or tumbled down of themselves, and although the destiny of the place still hangs in uncertainty, it is probable that before long the whole will disappear into space for a time, to emerge adapted to the requirements of millionaires. Now this sharp corner, we take it, was once Knightsbridge Green—a little crosscut of a passage bears that name—a green

with a pond, and geese, and white posts and rails; once upon a time, perhaps, with the brook running across, and a bridge strong enough to have borne the knights and their destriers, as they rode up from the west country at the King's bidding.

A little morsel of that Knightsbridge Green has been preserved by the Tattersalls, and is a joy for ever within its iron railing, where carriages and cabs come sweeping round, and stand and wait at all hours. Sometimes a Duke in a big drag, with four spanking horses; sometimes Mr. and Mrs. Brown in a one-horse shay; while a couple of bookmakers from the manufacturing districts drive up in a shabby four-wheeler, with a paper of shrimps between them, at which they are munching, regardless of heads or tails. There is a goat within, nibbling at the fresh grass, and giving a rural, and at the same time a stably aspect to the scene. And there is the greyish-brown pediment of Tattersall's gateway, with a throng passing in and out, and horses champing their bits, and harness rattling. On the left is the big subscription-room, with its steps and awning, under which an excited crowd would seethe and shout on the eve of some great race. There is less excitement now—not that betting has fallen off, but it is more diffused, carried on at clubs and sporting-houses all over the country.

On a fine Monday morning, the season just fairly started, the country people up in town for Epsom, for Ascot, for Goodwood, for all the delights and pleasures of the opening summer, what pleasanter resort than Tattersall's, under the great span roof with the glazed openings, with the soft gravel under the feet, horses tramping and curvetting about, and a general sound of voices, more than a murmur, and yet not amounting to a roar; voices of every pitch and cadence, from the husky monotone of the country boniface to the aristocratic concert-pitch of Lady Vere de Vere. And while a goodly number are assembled in the hall of sales, making its roof resound with animated talk—now of the events of the last hunting season, now of what may be expected in the next—there is a general tramp, tramp, all through the stables and stalls, where all the horses that are on sale to-day may be seen and criticised by the public. Here is the good hunter, ridden on parade, and quiet in harness, that cranes his neck, and views from the corner of his eyes his unaccustomed visitors. Here is Blackstrap by Doctor, dam by Jalap, up to fifteen stone, and has carried a lady, and Blackstrap toys carelessly with a loose hind leg, and seems to measure distance carefully as he sees his friends approach. Here they are, line upon line, and box after box, chestnuts, browns, and roans, bay geldings, and black mares, temperate and clever, good action and manners, good fencer, and fast, quiet to ride and drive, and so on through the sixteen stall stable, and along the fourteen stall stable, and getting quite bewildered among it all—a hundred and fifty horses munching their hay and corn, and all indifferent to the change of masters that the next few hours may bring.

Right in the centre of the great hall is the palladium of the establishment, without which it would not be Tattersall's at all, and would necessarily come to grief, and that is a rather pretty little temple of classic model, with a bust of the once Prince of Wales, the future Adonis, on the top, and within the well-known effigy of a fox that has occupied the same position so long as the memory of man can testify. All round is a light, handsome gallery, occupied by carriages of every description sent here for sale; while one side of the area below is fenced off, and a corner is occupied by a substantial pulpit, with a sounding-board overhead.

It is some way past eleven o'clock, and the serious feeling of the moment is increased as you see an attendant horse-keeper flecking the last specks of dust from the pulpit-desk, while a clerk carefully arranges a book and papers, for all the world as in a Scotch church just before the minister makes his appearance. And before the great clock in the hall shows the half-hour, a mysterious whisper has passed among all the attendants — quiet-looking men in blue cricketing caps, with here and there one with a whip, used for cracking purposes only, like the little guns you see on board-ship for firing salutes. But one says to the other, "Is it lock up, yet?" And the other replies cautiously: "Not yet."

But the word is passed before long, "Lock up," and from every side resounds the slamming of doors, and turning of keys, while those who have been taking a last lingering look at their fancies hasten forth to join the rest of the crowd in the hall. One lively youth has lingered too long and been locked in, and is helped out through a window. And while our attention is engrossed by this little episode, we find

that the pulpit is now occupied, and that business has commenced. "Why, they've got the two-year-old out to-day," observes a wheezy voice close by, for it is not the well-known form of the chief of the firm that meets the eye, but the fresh, youthful face of the latest of the Tattersalls; the Tattersall of the future he may be called, who, in due course, may see out another generation of sportsmen from the present; who may see the old faces fade away, and many a new one come to the front. "Going, going, gone!" There is quite a melancholy appropriateness about the words, as you look round and think what changes another twenty years will make in the composition of the throng.

But up and down goes a horse, walking, or rather dancing, upon its hind legs; the biddings go on, a knowing-looking dealer plunges under the rails, and makes a hasty survey of the animal's mouth in spite of its evident objection to the process. To the outside spectator there is always a degree of mystery about the auctioneer. How does he pick up the bids that are conveyed by a wink, perhaps, or an imperceptible movement of the chin, by some sign anyhow which the keenest attention of the observer fails to detect. But young Mr. Richard seems to take to it all as naturally as possible. The greatest of the auctioneers rarely indulge in eloquence. A country practitioner will expend as much fire about an old frying-pan as Tattersall would about a two thousand guinea yearling; but there is a manner that is more eloquent than words, and there is a kind of generalship in the business that comes out on great occasions.

But here everything is sharp and decisive; the hammer comes down sharply upon the last bidding. "Another turn," to the groom, who hangs on to the halter, and flies up and down the track, while bystanders recede gracefully from the horse's heels. "A hundred and fifty—fifty-five—to be sold; and sixty—against you—sixty-five—any advance—going," bang! And, by this time, another animal is prancing along towards the rostrum, when the process of extracting the last bid and knocking down, metaphorically, the horse, is gone through with the same expedition. Meantime, from the gallery above, the number of the lot has been shown on a large placard, dealers mark off the prices with stumpy pencils, and amateurs criticise the appearance and action of the animal under the hammer.

And thus the sale goes on, hour after hour; and before nightfall some fifteen or twenty thousand pounds' worth of horse-flesh will have changed owners, and to-morrow they will march away in strings to their new quarters—some back to the shires to summer pastures and lightsome frolics, others to carry youth and beauty in the parks, others again as coach-horses to trundle stately old dowagers hither and thither; while here and there one—a good fencer and fast—having seen its best days, will be consigned to the shafts of a rattling hansom, and so end its career upon the arid stones of this London wilderness.

TO A THRUSH.

How I do envy thee, thou small brown bird,
That sittest on the slowly budding spray
Of yonder tree, and all the pale spring day
Pourest thy song abroad, till swift upstirred
The other birds sing forth their merry song.
Singing unheeding or of pain or wrong,

I hear thee trilling through the sweet moist air!
How free thy music; how it, welling out,
Makes the world vocal: what hast thou with doubt?
What knowest thou of all we mortals bear?
Ah, little dost thou reck of sin or pain;
Nor dost thou know that frost must come again!

Oh, I am weighted with a world of care;
I cannot sing like thee, mute am I sure!
I feel all that thou say'st, but must endure
In silence, for I may not take my share
In that vast stream of praise that is outpoured
When sweet spring rises up to greet her Lord.

Teach me thy secret, happy bird, I wait
Expectantly to listen for the charm,
That keeps thee ignorant of sin and harm,
And those fierce joys that make the sufferer great,
That crown him in the presence of the earth,
That hail him conqueror o'er the ills of birth.

What, wilt thou not confide in me to-night?
See how the wan moon creeps above the firs,
While in the topmost boughs a sad song stirs,
Too sad, too sweet, to greet her beauty bright.
Then art thou silent as the night glides by,
Drawing her garments o'er the saffron sky.

I cannot sing, for oh! my heart is sore;
Thou hast no heart, dear bird, so thou can'st sing,
Thou hast no past, no future that may bring
Some deadly dart to pierce thee to the core;
Thou livest in the present's fair blue sky,
That is thy secret shared by none, save I.

CHRONICLES OF ENGLISH COUNTIES.

DORSET.

An isolated, half-amphibious population long inhabited the coast of Dorset, fishermen who fished mostly for kegs of spirits and cases of lace and tobacco. The sand-banks and intricate channels of Poole Harbour—its inlets and creeks bordered by a wild and desolate country—gave the district roundabout a pre-eminent position

in the annals of smuggling. Here was effected the crowning exploit, perhaps, of the comrades of Will Watch of ballad fame, when they broke open the custom-house of Poole and rescued a comrade and his forfeited chests of tea. In this exploit the men of Poole were assisted by the smugglers of Sussex; the famous Hawkhurst gang marched across Hampshire to join in the enterprise, and many of both counties afterwards paid the penalty, and were hung in chains up and down the country roads.

In earlier times, before a war of tariffs began, a more legitimate trade enriched the burghers of Poole. With Rouen and the Seine a brisk commerce had been carried on from the earliest times, and Wareham, higher up the estuary, shared in the prosperity it brought. In the mouth of the harbour—or gulf, it might more properly be called—of Poole, lies Branksea Island, with an Elizabethan castle built to protect the port when Spaniards were cruising about the narrow seas, and the island, with its rich deposits of potter's and other clays, became the scene of a modern romance, when Colonel Waugh essayed to turn its clays into gold, and flourished for a time as a fairy prince of finance.

The southern shore of the estuary is formed by the great island or peninsula of Purbeck, with its ancient population of quarrymen. A chain of hills cuts off an isolated tract to the south, and in the centre of this range, the ancient Corfe Gate, where the old highway winds through a gap among the hills, stands the once famous fortress of Corfe Castle.

A sinister history has this ancient castle, a royal seat of the West Saxon kings, whose earliest written record is in the Saxon Chronicle under the year 978. In this year King Edward was slain at eventide at Corfe Gate. Ancient as is the record, the story with this tragic ending might form the groundwork of a modern romance.

Among the hills of Devon lived a fair, golden-haired girl, Elfrida, the daughter of Ordgar, the Earl of that ilk. She was the beauty of the country round—fair as an angel, with the ambition and the passions of another kind of being. King Edgar heard a report of her beauty, and sent a favourite thane, Athelwold, to judge if the damsel was indeed so fair as fame had painted her. Athelwold, on first sight of Elfrida, was fairly enthralled by her charms; he was determined to win her for himself, and sent to his King a slighting report of her person. In the meantime, Athelwold's wooing speeded well. The damsel had seen no better or nobler suitor, and so married him, looking forward to leaving the wilds of Devon for the gayer, brighter scenes at the King's court, which her husband's position should open to her. But great was the young bride's disgust when she found that her husband kept her secluded in the country, and refused to take her to the King's court. Envious tongues soon retailed to her the real motive of the seclusion in which she was kept. She found means to evade the watch her husband had set upon her, and presented herself before the King in all the pride of her youth and beauty.

King Edgar, impassioned at the sight, eagerly demanded the name and quality of the beautiful creature. The truth was soon told, and the unfaithfulness of Athelwold was revealed. No stronger tie could bind men together than that of king and thegn; companions in hall and in battle, one to lead, the other to follow or die in fellowship; and to betray his lord was a crime that only death could expiate in an unworthy thegn. People did not ask how Athelwold died; enough that the end came quickly, and Elfrida was a widow, soon in royal robes to share the throne of the King of the Angles. Presently a son was born to the unhallowed nuptials, and with that the woman's ambition began to stir again. It troubled her to think that not her boy, the lovely child Ethelred, but the King's eldest son, Edward, of an earlier marriage, would rule at her husband's death. When her boy was six years old the King died, and Edward, who was only twelve, succeeded to the throne of England. Elfrida full of bitterness retired with her boy to the royal seat of Corfe Gate.

Some four years after the young King was at Wareham, and hunting through all the country round about. One evening the chase had led him far, and he had outridden all his attendants, when he came to a pleasant house among the hills, which he recognised as the dwelling of his stepmother and of the little brother whom he dearly loved. The whole household was in commotion at the appearance of the King. Elfrida came forward to welcome him, bringing with her the special cup with which it was the custom to welcome the coming as well as to speed the parting guest. As he stooped to drink, the idea flashed upon the fateful Queen that here

was the opportunity for which she had long waited, and with a dagger she struck her guest to the heart. The King galloped off, but fell from his saddle, and was dragged by his golden stirrup till life was gone. It is said that when Elfrida brought the news to her son that his brother was dead, and he now King of England, the boy wailed so bitterly the loss of his brother that the Queen in her rage seized a wax-taper from the altar of her chapel, and belaboured him with it so lustily that he was left senseless on the ground.

Edward's body, hidden in a humble cottage, was afterwards buried in great pomp at Shaftesbury, and by the popular voice he was recognised as saint and martyr, and the parish church of Corfe, as well as other ancient Saxon churches, was dedicated to his honour. The Queen, pursued by general execration, hid her beauty and her crimes within the walls of a nunnery, and spent the rest of her life in penance.

The history of the Norman castle that was built soon after the Conquest on the site of the Saxon villa, is of the same gloomy order. It was used chiefly as a state prison —a living tomb for the subjects of royal suspicion. Here was prisoner for a time Robert of Normandy, a captive in the hands of his brother. A century later, Eleanor, the Damsel of Bretagne, the sister of Prince Arthur, was here immured by her uncle John. A true ogre's castle this, with imprisoned damsels pining for a deliverer who never came; with dungeons dark and foul, where unhappy captive knights were left to die of slow starvation. Twenty-two knights captured at Mirabeau with Arthur and Eleanor were, according to the chronicles, starved to death at Corfe, and the recent historian of the castle, Mr. Thomas Bond, has drawn strong confirmation of this terrible story in the King's written instructions to his constable, who, in regard to these prisoners, was to follow the verbal directions of the King's messengers. Here, too, was hidden the King's treasure, and the royal crown, and jewels, which he was presently to lay down with his life among the fens of Lincolnshire.

Here, too, was enacted one of the strangest and most gloomy pageants of which we have any record. King Edward the Second had been held a prisoner here for a time before his murder at Berkeley Castle, and in the mystery that surrounded the King's death, it was whispered that he was not really dead, but kept still in close captivity at Corfe. The late King's brother, Edmund, Earl of Kent, heard the rumour, and dissatisfied with the rule of Queen Isabel and her favourite, Mortimer, would gladly have believed the rumour true. And this gave occasion to a plot which was soon prepared for his destruction.

In order to give semblance to the report of the King's captivity, shows and maskings were got up, "with dancing upon the towers and walls of the castle, which being perceived by the people of the country, it was thought there was some great King residing in the fortress, for whom these shows were provided." Upon hearing of this, the Earl proceeded to the neighbourhood, and finding full confirmation of these things, among the inhabitants round about, he sent a certain friar to find out the truth. The friar, after many pretended difficulties, gained admittance to the castle, and was brought into the great hall, where he was shown "a person sitting royally at supper, who with great majesty counterfeited the King." Upon the report of his emissary, the Earl himself rode to the castle, and demanded an interview with his brother, the King. The constable of the castle, not denying that the King was there, refused to permit an interview, but offered to take charge of a letter. The Earl fell blindly into the trap so cunningly laid, and wrote a letter to the supposed King, which was at once shown to the Queen and the young King. Thereupon the Earl was arraigned before the Parliament at Winchester, when his own letter was produced. He was condemned of high treason and beheaded at Winchester before the castle gate, and it is said that so strong was the feeling in his favour that no one could be found to perform the office of executioner, and the Earl waited at the castle gate from noon till nearly night, when some poor wretch was found to do the office.

All this and many other interesting particulars of the estate of a royal castle in the olden time will be found in Mr. Bond's recent and excellent history. But here there is only space to glance briefly at the subsequent chronicles of the castle, which is still a noble ruin, although it suffered much from the effects of gunpowder used to demolish it at the end of the Civil Wars of the seventeenth century.

The castle remained in royal hands, with its Constable generally a nobleman of distinction, till Henry the Seventh granted it to his mother, the famous Countess of Richmond and Derby. Years after her death King Henry the Eighth gave the

castle to his natural son, Henry Duke of Richmond, who did not long survive the gift. Nor was the next grantee, the Duke of Somerset, in the following reign, more fortunate, who soon fell beneath the headsman's axe. But if there was an evil spell upon the castle, it was broken by Elizabeth, who, mindful, perhaps, that where money passes, the ill-luck of a gift is avoided, sold the whole estate to her favourite, Sir Christopher Hatton, the dancing Lord Keeper; but as he had bought more estates than he could pay for, the castle was sold again, first to the Cokes and then to Sir John Bankes, Chief Justice, in whose descendants it still remains. Lady Bankes made a famous defence of the castle for the King in the Civil Wars, and after that the fortifications were demolished by gunpowder, as has already been told.

Among the ruins of the Norman walls still exist the remains of a much earlier building, perhaps the very chapel of St. Aldhelm, which witnessed the orisons of the perfidious Saxon Queen. St. Aldhelm, it may be noted, was the first bishop of the see, which was formerly placed at Sherborne, and afterwards became the see of Salisbury; and he has given his name to the headland which, by a very easy transition, has come to be more generally known as St. Alban's.

At Swanage, too, there is an ancient church, with a tower of still greater antiquity. Indeed, the whole district of Purbeck has an old-world flavour about it; and the customs and laws of its quarriers, whose place of meeting is the green of Corfe Castle, are full of interest as survivals of earlier days.

Following the coast, Lulworth Cove is the next opening on the iron-bound coast, with its castle of the sixteenth and later centuries overlooking the sea, long the seat of the ancient Catholic family of Weld; and there is little to break the long line of cliffs till we come to Weymouth, with its long esplanade and the memory of the more recent royalties who brought the place into fashion.

As for the ancient records of Weymouth we may consult Coker, whose ancient survey throws some light upon the matter. Coker does not blame the men of Weymouth for helping their King Edward the Third "with fifteen ships and two hundred and sixty-three mariners to besiege Callice," as the French, "both then and many times sithence have essayed to burn their town and destroy the inhabitants." Coker also reports "these townes," Weymouth and Melcome Regis, that are separated by the harbour, and were long at feud and enmity, "now gaine well by traffique with Newfoundland, where they have eighty sayle of ships and barkes; as also a nearer cutt with France, opposite to them, whence they return laden with wines, cloath, and divers other useful commodities." But Weymouth, having lost the Newfoundland trade, while the French traffic had also declined, had sunk to a mere fishing-town, when it was taken up by royalty in 1789. Some of its French trade it has recovered through the steamers of the Great Western Railway; and it is also the depot of a considerable trade with Jersey in early fruits and vegetables, and is often busy enough in the new-potato season, when steamers are plying to and fro, freighted with innumerable small barrels, which visit in turn, perhaps, all the great vegetable markets of the country.

From Weymouth the Isle of Portland, with its quarries and convicts, stretches far out into the sea, almost connected with the main land by that wonderful natural causeway of loose pebbles known as Chesil Bank, which continues along the coast like a barrier-reef for ten miles or so, enclosing a strip of salt water that is always smooth and untroubled. And all along the coast there is no opening or shelter till we come to Bridport, a town that owes its popularity to the manufacture of nets and cordage, for which it was famous even in the days of Henry the Eighth, who ordered that all the tackling for his ships should be there purchased. Just on the borders of Devonshire we come to another ancient port, almost unique among harbours, as it is formed by no river or tidal-creek, but has for its only protection a natural breakwater—originally of loose cobbles or round stones, but now strengthened by art, and forming a solid mass of masonry. The town clusters along the sides of a romantic combe, the first of the rugged little west-country coast towns, the homes of the brave adventurous seamen who explored a new world under Raleigh, or fought the Spaniards under Hawkins and Drake, or roved and plundered among the islands of the Spanish Main. Off the coast just here began the running fight with the Spanish Armada, and the descendants of the men who had fought for their Queen against Pope and Spaniard banded themselves together half a century later to defend their town against King Charles. In the long and desperate

siege of Lyme the Royalists were at last beaten off.

There were many yet living who had taken part in the defence of their town, to welcome the little flotilla that found shelter within the cobb, the three ships of the Duke of Monmouth which had been nineteen days at sea from Flushing, having escaped the King's fleet and the perils of a stormy voyage. The Duke set up his standard in the little market-place of Lyme, and the peasantry and townsfolk flocked to it from far and near once more to fight against Popery and prelacy, and the Duke presently marched on towards fatal Sedgemoor with near four thousand men. Soon followed the bloody assize, and the gallows was erected at Lyme, and a terrible execution followed. Among the victims was William Hewbury of London, Lieutenant of Foot, the son of an eminent Turkey merchant of the city, and the grandson of one Mr. Kyffin, of an eminent Nonconformist family. His brother Benjamin, who had also joined the Duke, was executed at Taunton. Their sister Hannah strove to save them by an appeal to the King's mercy. Lord Churchill, the future Duke of Marlborough, exerted himself to obtain her admission to the Royal presence, but gave her no hope of success. "That marble," he said, pointing to one of the ornaments of the royal antechamber, "is as capable of feeling as the King's heart."

Soon, however, the King's heart was wrung by his own misfortunes, and in his efforts to conciliate the citizens of London, he was advised to secure the influence of Mr. Kyffin as one of the most respected citizens and the most influential among the dissenting sects. Mr. Kyffin sadly replied to the King's condescending words that he had long since withdrawn from worldly affairs; and, moreover, he continued in a voice broken with emotion, "the death of my grandsons gave a wound to my heart which is still bleeding, and will never close but in the grave." The King, it is said, turned pale—livid, we may fancy—as when the mud-stained messenger brought the news of the landing at Torbay, and he seemed at once to realise how hopeless were his efforts.

Yet another episode connected with Monmouth's rebellion may be told in this connection, although the scene is on the extreme border of the county towards Hampshire. Here, at Shags Heath, in a wood surrounded by a wild and desolate country, Monmouth, a fugitive from the field of Sedgemoor, hid himself from the soldiers who had spread themselves over the country in his pursuit. A farmer, who had seen the fugitive enter the enclosure, gave information to the soldiers, and the country-people afterwards loved to tell how from that time nothing ever prospered with the informer, who sank with his family into the rank of paupers. And here the spoilt child of the Court, the petted cavalier of the rank and beauty of the period, was found grovelling in the mud of a tangled ditch, while the soldier who captured him and who had seen him at the head of his regiment in former days, burst into tears at the sight, and besought his forgiveness.

Thus far our chronicle has been chiefly concerned with the country about the sea-coast, and perhaps the chief interest of the county is centred there, as the open downs of Dorset, with their scanty population, have not hitherto supplied much interesting material for the local historian. Chief over the chalk country is Dorchester, an interesting little town, and very ancient settlement. The shaded walks that border the town are on the lines of the old Roman walls, and all its inhabitants twice told might be contained in the amphitheatre, hewn out of the hill-side, where once gladiators may have fought, "butchered to make a Roman holiday." An English holiday of equally barbarous character was afforded early in the last century by the burning of one Mary Channing, just previously executed for the murder of her husband, a crime then regarded in the light of petty treason, and as worthy to be marked with extreme punishment. Some ten thousand beholders are said to have found room to witness the gruesome sight from the sloping banks. The ancient British city probably had its site a mile to the south-west of the present town, where is Maiden Castle—tallest and strongest of all the maidens scattered up and down the land—an enormous earthwork, surrounded by treble ditches and ramparts of prodigious size and depth. This was probably the Dinas-fawr, or big fortress, of the Britons, while the Romans modified the name, with less disguise than their wont, to Durnovaria.

And a town of some kind has here clung to existence with great tenacity ever since those old-world times. In Domesday it is recorded that a hundred houses lay waste, long ago demolished by the Danes. And fire has done its work many times since to destroy any relics of the past, although

Roman coins are often picked up in the neighbourhood and are called Dorn-pennies. Old Icknield Way, too, passes through Dorchester, entering the town by the north side of St. Peter's, by Trinity Church, and pursuing its course along the ridge to the westward. It may often be traced where all other track is lost by the boundaries of hundreds and parishes, and worthy Dr. Stakely followed it a century or more ago from Caistor, in Norfolk, and through all the intervening counties right into Dorset.

As for the more modern Roman roads their trace is followed almost exactly by the present highways, which correspond with the cardinal points of the compass. Following that to the northwards, we come to Cerne Abbas—whose ancient abbey has left some small but interesting remains—where Margaret of Anjou rested for a night on her way to defeat and ruin at Tewkesbury. Above the town rises a steep chalk-hill, crowned by an entrenchment, on the declivity of which is, or was, a gigantic figure cut out of the turf, after the White Horse example, representing a man holding a club. Tradition makes this commemorate the destruction of a giant, who, having wasted Blackmore Vale, and gorged himself with slaughtered sheep, here disposed himself for an after-dinner nap, and was, like Gulliver, pinioned to the earth, and finally put to death by the enraged peasants, who traced his dimensions on the sod for the information of posterity.

Farther to the north is Sherborne, with its fine minster church, where once a bishop had his seat; and Sherborne Lodge, near the site of the ancient castle—the castle built by Stephen, and demolished by Cromwell. It was one of the last of the strongholds that held out for the King in the west country, and when Fairfax finally compelled it to surrender, a numerous company of officers were captured and a quantity of warlike stores. The earlier history of the castle and domain is not without interest. Osmond, Earl of Dorset and Lord of Sherborne, one of the Conqueror's favourite chiefs, repenting his deeds of rapine and bloodshed, embraced a religious life, and became Bishop of Sarum. He endowed the see with the castle and estate of Sherborne, annexing to the gift a curse, both in this world and in the next, upon any who should take them from the Church. The Crown, however, got hold of the domain, and granted it to various nobles, with the curse annexed, it seems, for they all came to a bad end. In the reign of Elizabeth, it was granted to Sir Walter Raleigh, who built the central portion of the lodge, but to whom it brought the customary bad luck. When Raleigh was attainted the estate fell to the Crown, although Raleigh had a son, for whom his mother pleaded in vain. "I maun hae it for Carr," was the King's invariable reply, meaning for his worthless favourite. But Prince Henry interfered, and procured a grant to himself, intending, it is said, to transfer it to the Raleigh family. And here again the curse was seen at work, for Henry died soon after, an event fraught with fateful issues to the house of Stuart. Carr got the estate, at last, and we know what became of him. On his attainder the estate was begged by Sir John Digby, who broke the charm by paying a round sum to Prince Charles for secure possession. Young Carew Raleigh had made several attempts to move the King in his favour. Once he was introduced at court, when James roughly told him: "Begone! the lad is the ghost of his father!" When Charles the First came to the throne it was thought that he would reinstate young Raleigh, but there was that retaining fee in the way which it was not convenient to refund, and so the youth was compelled to assign his rights for an annuity of four hundred a year. All which history shows how dangerous it is to receive presents of castles and lands without full knowledge of the disabilities attaching to them, in the way of unexpired curses and unsatisfied ghosts.

Attached to the cathedral of Sherborne is a fine old grammar-school, and a hospital still more ancient, dedicated to St. Augustine, for poor old men and women. The old bedesmen here were the last in this country to keep up the remembrance of the great old heathen festival of Midsummer, watching all night on St. John's Eve, while a garland was hung up on the door as an offering to the presiding deity.

It may be noticed how many of these minster towns there are in the county, generally with a noble church or the remains of one, suggesting that perhaps the church was built without any reference to the size of the settlement about it; although the sight of grand old churches in the midst of a sparse and decreasing population has led many to believe in the existence of a large agricultural population which has now vanished from the soil.

Conspicuous among the minster towns is Wimborne, whose fine old church is remarkable for its arrangement of a central tower, with a single western tower. Here lies Ethelred, the unready king, whom we have seen beaten by his mother with a wax-candle at Corfe Castle. Here is a fine monument in Purbeck marble, with alabaster effigies of John Beaufort, the grandson of old Gaunt, and his wife, the parents of Margaret of Richmond, the clever mother of Henry the Seventh. John Beaufort was constable of Corfe Castle, and lived there, no doubt, in some state, till he was carried to his last rest at Wimborne.

From Wimborne, a pleasant way by the river Stour leads to Blandford Forum, where mediæval memories are exchanged for a comparatively modern aspect that reminds one somehow of Marylebone. The church is Grecian, the houses are of the Hanoverian type; all is brisk, clean, and modern. The high-street ends in a green and pleasant park, and when you are told that the park is called Bryanstone, and that the proprietor is Lord Portman, the metropolitan suggestions seem accounted for and intensified by the familiar names.

If you ask the reason of all this newness, the answer is, the great fire of 1731, when all houses were burnt except forty, and as this was the fifth great fire within a couple of centuries, there is little wonder at the scanty crop of antiquities. Fire seems to be the common and remorseless enemy of all the towns in Dorset. Thatched roofs and scarcity of water-supply may account for the destructiveness of these formerly frequent fires, but there is still an element of unaccountableness in the matter which we must leave for others to explain.

Following rail and highway, Sturminster indicates the higher course of the river with some scattered ruins of a small castle that has left no mark in history, while another road, curiously winding, leads to Shaftesbury, one of the most notable of hill-towns, occupying the crest of a chalk-ridge—a favourite position for an ancient British town, but disliked by the Saxon race, who prefer for their habitations a river-valley. Thus there is a good deal of likelihood about its ancient history, and if Julius Cæsar were not a former inhabitant, it is highly probable that some of his successors visited it. So that when King Alfred rebuilt it, after devastation by the Danes, the town had already a history of its own. But ill situated for a commercial town, Shaftesbury, which had three mints in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and twelve churches at the Domesday Survey, dwindled considerably when its monastery was suppressed and its ancient hospitals turned to secular uses.

With this we cross a somewhat wild and rolling country to Cranborne, that gave its name to the ancient chase, which has left some pleasant patches of woodland scenery. And here we are almost within reach of the New Forest, and of a district already explored.

A VERY ORDINARY STORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE day was drawing to a close; it had been a bright afternoon, with sudden gusts of wind which had blown the March dust with a fierce purifying breath up and down the London streets. It had failed, however, to improve the atmosphere upon the Underground Railway, through which a crowd of busy folk was hurrying westward. The first and second class carriages were full, but the third-class were overflowing—sixteen persons being jammed into a compartment intended to hold ten, none of the ten being supplied with a very liberal allowance of space to start with. The inconvenience and crowding were further increased by the fact that most of the travellers carried packages in their hands or under their arms; the workmen had their bags of tools, a couple of errand-boys had baskets of cumbrous and inconvenient shape; and one man had a long piece of metal tubing, which declined altogether to accommodate itself to the exigencies of the situation. The marvel as to how the passengers had ever stowed themselves away faded into insignificance before the puzzling question—how they were to get out at their respective stations, unless they had adopted the precaution of arranging themselves in the right order for descending. At every stoppage there was a considerable amount of scuffling and pushing, all carried on in a good-tempered, although hurried fashion. The conduct of most of the passengers was characterised by an easy amiability and eagerness to help one another. It is astonishing with what patience people will bear the serious inconveniences which occur daily, whilst they resent fiercely those occasional ones which are comparatively trifling.

The one exception to the general good-humour was to be found in a workman who was half asleep during the first

part of the journey, but awoke just as the train rushed out of the tunnel into the open air by the Edgware Road station.

"Now what I say is," he remarked with an emphasis in astounding contrast with his previous listless disregard of all external circumstance—"Now what I say is they are all a set of confounded fools!"

The remark was addressed to no one in particular, and no one seemed inclined to answer it; the speaker therefore repeated the assertion with redoubled vigour.

The compartment was now comparatively empty, that is to say, it only contained the number of passengers for whose accommodation it had been built, and the speaker had, therefore, room to sway his body forwards in a half-stupid, half-pugnacious way, as if seeking for an opponent. With the cunning of a clouded intellect he fixed upon the only fellow-traveller who could really be annoyed by his attentions. A slim, pale girl, nearly opposite to him, coloured up suddenly as he paused in his half-tipsy survey of the carriage and addressed her solemnly:

"I should be very glad, miss, to hear your opinion on politics. In my 'pinion they are all confounded fools. What do you say? You've got a sensible face."

The girl did not answer for a moment, and then muttered something which sounded like "I don't know."

"Don't know," repeated the man with indignant emphasis. "An Englishwoman, and don't know! I know, I can tell you, and what I say is, that the rich ought to be made to pay. They lead easy lives—they do—with their wines and fish-dinners; but fish don't keep their hair from turning white—that it don't." Then, suddenly recovering himself, he dropped his maudlin tone and resumed his inquisitorial one. "Now, what's your view, miss?"

A young man, broad shouldered and hard featured, who had been intent upon his book during the greater part of the journey, looked up suddenly and took in the whole scene at a glance.

"You are too hot there," he said to the girl, rising from his seat near the window, and imperiously motioning her to occupy it. "You'll get a nice breeze if you sit here. Now then, mate," he went on, as he took his place opposite the eager politician, "where's the use of expecting ladies to talk about public affairs? I am ready enough for a chat with you."

His voice had that mixture of good-humour and firmness which pierces through the mists even of combined drink and stupidity.

"I was saying they were a lot of confounded fools," was the answer, given, however, in a less aggressive tone of voice; "and I should like to know who will contradick me."

No one did contradict him, and the train coming to a standstill he followed a large number of his fellow-passengers out of the carriage, pausing, however, on the platform to say "No offence meant," with a certain vague sense that he owed an apology somewhere.

"I am afraid he frightened you," said the young man, closing his book, and speaking more gently then one would have expected from his hard face and rough dress. "It is a good plan to have a book with you, and then you don't have to pay attention to every fool who wants to talk to you or quarrel with you."

"I do very often read," said the girl shyly, "but I am too tired to-day."

She spoke as if stating a simple fact, but without a tinge of discontent in her voice. Under her shabby black hat her face looked pale and her eyes weary. She was very young still, and her attitude had the simple pathos of an over-tired child. Something of the contrast between his strength and her weakness smote the man with a sudden sense of injustice.

"You will have a quiet time when you get home," he said, with the air of one uttering a command rather than asking a question.

"Oh yes, if aunt does not want me," she replied.

He took up the book and began to read, then closed it with a sudden resolution.

"You'll think me one of the fools I mentioned just now, who must go on talking; but you ought not to sit with that window open just in your face; it is enough to give you a cold."

"Thank you," she said meekly, as she shut it. "I forgot all about it."

He did not speak again, but he opened the door for her when she rose up at the next station, and he watched her until she was lost in the crowd making its way up the steps into the open air.

CHAPTER II.

POOR little Mary Brown had her share of real commonplace troubles. A mantlemaker in a large house in the City has the privilege of suffering as keenly as a princess of the blood royal—a fact it seems hardly

worth while to mention, but yet one which in an ordinary story must not be forgotten. There was little that was stimulating or beautiful in her life. She hurried every day from a dreary home in a dreary street to a large, brilliantly-lighted, unventilated work-room, and the little daily tokens and touches of tenderness and sympathy which lend brightness to many such lives were absolutely wanting in her experience.

Something of her pathetic soul-hunger looked out of her grey eyes, but no vestige of it found expression in words, for she had never recognised the exceptional joylessness of her lot, or realised the necessity for its improvement. Her great enjoyment, the reading of romances, was an unconscious effort to satisfy her yearnings after something fuller and brighter than would be afforded by the daily round of her existence, and if her ideal world was but a poor, vulgar, pretentious show, she was yet much happier for her possession of it.

She was deep in her enjoyment of a novel one evening, about a week after the date of the trifling event just recorded. It had been a soaking wet day, and a disagreeable steam of damp clothes arose from the overcrowded carriage, but she did not heed it. She was quite absorbed, and noticed nothing until a voice at her side brought her back to the realities of life.

"Ah! You're taking my advice and reading, I see," said her neighbour.

She looked up in a startled way, and saw the smiling face of her acquaintance of the preceding week.

"Good-evening," he went on, nodding with much energy. "You have not forgotten me, have you?"

Mary shook her head, and then looked longingly at her story.

"You ain't going to follow my advice too closely, are you, and shut me up?" he asked again, still with a smile on his face. "I waited for this train because you travelled by it last week, and I wanted to know if you'd met our political friend again."

Mary smiled at the reminiscence.

No, she hadn't seen him.

"Well, I won't keep you from your book. I see your heart is in it," he said good-naturedly, and he peeped over her shoulder as he spoke to see what was engrossing her attention. His voice changed as he read, and he went on: "Now tell me, do you really like that stuff?"

Mary turned a pair of startled eyes upon him.

"It is beautiful!" she said. "At least, some parts."

"If the writing is like the drawing," he went on, outlining with contemptuous finger the form of a very slim young gentleman who was slipping off a grassy bank, "the people in the story can't be much like human beings."

"Oh, but they're lords and ladies," said Mary naïvely.

"Lords and ladies!" and he laughed, not scornfully, but with a quiet amusement which annoyed her considerably. "Ain't they human beings? Do you think they are

> "Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
> Do grow beneath their shoulders."

"I don't understand long words," she replied, a little petulantly; "but they are beautifully dressed, and live in very grand houses."

"Now, do you think a lord is anything like that creature?" he asked, with some emphasis, as he fixed his finger on the obnoxious drawing. "Why, bless your soul, I had a talk with a lord once, and he was no more like this than you are."

Mary looked at the picture, put it on one side, and settled herself for a comfortable talk. Here was an opportunity not to be lost.

"Did you really?" she asked. "Do tell me about it."

"Why, I was sent down to a big place once—Castle Bone, it is called; Lord Norwich's place—to look after a machine that had broken down. He had a fancy for lighting his house by electricity, and as his engine was always out of order, I took it in hand."

"Was it a grand place?"

"Not as big as Windsor Castle, but big enough."

"With splendid pictures?"

"There were lots of pictures, but not half such good ones as you and I can see any day at the National Gallery."

Mary put aside any allusion to the possibilities of her own life, being interested only in this higher order of beings with whom she had now a chance of something like personal acquaintance.

"Did you see the lord—Lord Norwich?" she asked eagerly.

"Oh yes, several times." If he smiled at her eagerness, he did not do it unkindly. "He was a little, stout man, in a grey suit and a white hat, with rather a red face."

Mary sighed heavily and clutched her precious story more closely; her ideal was

not to be lightly parted with, when the real seemed to offer so little that was attractive.

"Did he speak to you?" she asked, after an interval of silence.

"Oh yes; he came down to the engine-room one day, and said, 'I hope you are not wasteful of the oil; because, by the time I have paid for its carriage, it costs me nearly sevenpence a gallon!'"

His eyes twinkled with fun as he told the story. Perhaps he had gone through a private experience of disillusion upon this very subject, and the memory of this lent extra piquancy to his enjoyment of Mary's disappointment.

His listener's face fell; it is no light matter to lose one's ideal, even if one's ideal be so poor a thing as the material magnificence of a peer of the realm.

"He was a middle-aged man, I suppose," she said after a little; "rather old, perhaps," and she brightened up at the notion —age might dim the glories of high birth and wealth. "Had he any daughters?"

"One—Lady Gertrude."

"Oh, did you ever see her?"

"I met her one day as I was going back to my lodgings in the village; it was a wet evening, like to-night."

"Was she walking? How was she dressed?"

"She had on a cloak just like yours;" Mary looked down at her shabby waterproof, considerably dismayed at a comparison which would have provoked Lady Gertrude's maid to unspeakable indignation; "and she was carrying a pudding-basin in her hand."

"A pudding-basin!" faltered Mary. "What was she doing with a basin?"

"She had been to see some old women and taken them some broth or some jelly, and just as I met her her umbrella blew inside out, and I picked it up for her and set it straight."

"Did she say anything?"

"Well, she couldn't exactly help saying 'Thank you,' but she did say something more. She went on: 'I think you must be Mr. Bates. Old Mary Layton has told me how kind you have been in mending her boiler.'"

"Was she beautiful?" asked the eager little soul, to whom the details of Lady Gertrude's speech seemed singularly commonplace and inappropriate.

"Pretty well," was the disappointing answer; "she had a nice gentle smile, but she was not half as pretty as——" Here he paused, and then filled up his speech with the lame conclusion, "a good many other folk."

"Dear me—dear me!" said Mary regretfully. "I always thought——"

"I know what you thought — you thought Earls and Dukes and grand ladies were different from ordinary people, but they are just the same, and why shouldn't they be, after all?"

She did not answer the question, although she felt sure she could give many excellent reasons. They had been talking in the tone which, without assuming the mystery of a whisper, yet shuts out anything like unintentional participation in their talk on the part of the bystanders. An old woman, however, who had been listening intently, suddenly exclaimed:

"Earls and Dukes and Lady Gertrude! A Princess in disguise I should think, and travelling third-class too."

As the dreadful old woman proceeded to explain to the compartment generally the cause of her surprise, Mary was glad to escape at the next station, and quite forgot to say good-bye to her new acquaintance, Mr. Bates, whose Christian name she feared would hardly be likely to atone for the plebeian nature of his surname.

CHAPTER III.

It was a bright Monday in April before Mary saw him again. Spring had come, as the Londoner knew by the tender green buds on some blackened branches, and by the baskets of primroses at the street-corners.

"You have been into the country?" said Ben Bates, almost with a disappointed air, as soon as he had wished her good evening.

She shook her head with a smile, which showed her pretty white teeth, and made her face almost beautiful.

"No. What makes you think so?"

"I saw you had some daffodils, and I thought you had picked them yesterday."

"No. Someone gave them to me."

"Oh!" was the monosyllabic reply, lengthened out, however, as much as a monosyllable can be.

"She had been staying in the country, and brought back a big basket of them with her," she went on, wondering at his injured tone, and quite unconscious that she was removing the cause. "Such a basket! I wish you could have seen it. I like daffodils—don't you?"

"The daffodils

"That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty,"

he quoted in a pleasant voice. "That I do."

"What's that? Say it again."

He repeated the lines, and waited to see the effect upon her.

"Before the swallow dares," she said slowly. "The swallows are not back yet. I watch them sometimes in our street on a Sunday afternoon, in the summer."

"That's Shakespeare," he explained. "Do you read Shakespeare?"

"Did not he write plays?" she asked, a little doubtfully. "Aunt Hester thinks theatres are wicked."

"Oh, does she? And does she think Shakespeare wicked, too?"

"I don't think she ever read him. I like that, though—'that come before the swallow dares.' I shall think of the daffodils when I next see the birds skimming about."

"I was in the country yesterday, too, and I brought some flowers back. I've kept them for you. Somehow I thought of you when I picked them."

She held her breath in admiration as he opened his basket and drew out a bunch of wood-anemones — those frail spring flowers so little known to Londoners.

"Did you get them for me?" she asked as she lifted her face from a close inspection of the green leaves and white petals. "How very, very good of you."

As the flush of pleasure faded from her face, and left it paler and more delicate than before, his comparison of her with the flowers she held in her hand seemed no inapt one. He looked at her intently, and something in his expression made her droop her face over her flowers, and ask hurriedly:

"Oh, where do they grow—where did you pick them?"

When she looked up he was smiling at her in his good-humoured half-patronising way, and she wondered why she had felt shy of him.

"I found them growing in a wood—hundreds of them—and I thought you'd like them. They are pretty, aren't they? Do you know what they are called? They're anemones—that means the wind flowers; I suppose, because they are such delicate things that they are blown about by every breeze. They ought to have something big and strong to shelter them, oughtn't they?"

Mary nodded.

"Do they?" she asked simply.

"Some of them do. They grow up close to the trees, which are not half, nor a quarter, as pretty as they are, but which keep off the cold winds from them."

"What a lot you do know," she said admiringly. "Have you read a great deal?"

"I wish I had," he said, with a real humility which contrasted strongly with his ordinarily somewhat self-assertive manner. "I haven't time to read much, but I pick up bits here and there."

"You seem to know a good deal about flowers."

"Oh, I go into the country every Sunday. I find it freshens up my wits more than anything."

"Every Sunday! Do you really?"

"Don't you ever go?" he asked, struck once more with the contrast between her lot and his. "It would do you a world of good."

She shook her head.

"I couldn't," she said. "Aunt Hester wouldn't like it."

"But what do you do on a Sunday?" he persisted.

"Oh, in the morning I go to chapel, in the afternoon I look out of window."

"What do you look at?"

"Oh, at the street and the people going up and down."

His keener intellect, with its more active power of suffering and of enjoyment, shrank from the picture she had conjured up, and pitied her far more intensely than she would ever pity herself.

"Don't you ever go on the river, or to Hampton Court, or to Hampstead?" he asked. "There are no end of places round London where one may have an afternoon in the open air without walking too far."

She shook her head.

"I don't know where Hampton Court is," she replied timidly. "Is it far off?"

"Not very; but don't you ever go for a jaunt anywhere?"

"No. Aunt says the only jaunt she wants to go is the jaunt to heaven."

Mary was not gifted with a sense of humour, and she was shocked at her companion's sudden outburst of laughter.

"To heaven! And when is she going there?" he asked as soon as he recovered from his surprise at the incongruous association of ideas.

"You oughtn't to laugh," said Mary severely; "she is a very good woman."

"I daresay," he made answer carelessly. "I've known all sorts of disagreeable people, bad disagreeable people and good disagreeable people, and the last do the most harm by a long way."

"They might do much more if they were bad," said Mary, actually plucking up sufficient courage to contradict one who was

to her a marvel of wisdom and of information. "Besides, whether they do harm or not, people ought to be good."

Mr. Bates would have liked to argue out the whole question of what is meant by good and bad; but he had sense to desist. The less a woman knows about her subject or about logic, the more certain is her triumph over any male adversary.

"Anyhow," said Mary, with a comfortable sense of being on firm ground, as she returned to a special from a general statement, "it was very good of you to bring me the flowers, and I am much obliged to you."

"Perhaps I may bring you some more," he said with a hesitation which was not unbecoming. "You always go by this train on Mondays and Thursdays, don't you? So do I."

Thus it came to pass that on whatever other day in the week Mary reached home late, she was always, as her aunt, Mrs. Goddard, noticed, as punctual as clockwork on Mondays and Thursdays.

Her whole life became changed and beautified by the certainty of seeing Ben's face looking out of the carriage window as the train stopped at Moorgate Street, and the intense pleasure of their meeting radiated through the rest of the week as a gentle, calm happiness which suffused itself over every commonplace act and event.

It is easy to smile at the absurdities of the situation; to object to the somewhat priggish pedantry of a self-educated Londoner, and the facile vanity of a badly-dressed, ignorant girl; but it is, perhaps, wiser, and certainly pleasanter, to dwell upon those deeper feelings which, beautiful and beautifying in every class, are most precious in those lives which know but little of external loveliness.

So the charm worked through the bright spring days, and the sultry summer ones, until an early, chilly autumn fell upon the London streets, and tore the yellow leaves from the smoky branches. During that time the two travellers had learnt to know one another well, although their acquaintance was limited to those short meetings which seemed to both the most important events of the summer. Often, when the close air seemed to lie like a weight upon their lungs during their evening journey, did Ben paint in glowing colours the delights of a Sunday under the trees in Epping Forest, or on the river by Hampton Court. However eloquent he was—and Mary drank in his words with thirsty, wondering ears—he expended his energies in vain. Her only answer was, "I know aunt would not like it," and against this he had nothing to urge, although he did not guess that her chief objection to the scheme lay in the fact that, before she could accede to it, she must tell her aunt of this new friend, whose existence was a secret from all but herself.

Ben was quite contented to remain in ignorance of her home and her people; to him as to her there was a romance about their regular meetings which raised them —as some other lovers have been raised before them—quite above the ordinary level of everyday life.

CHAPTER IV.

It was on a chilly Monday in October that they first failed to meet, and Mary, who was punctual to the usual time, went on her way with a dull sense of misery which seemed to weigh on her with deadly oppression during the whole of the next day. But it slipped from her suddenly as she saw him waiting for her on the platform of the station, as she descended the steps when her day's work was over. The colour deepened in her cheek, which had grown thinner during the hot summer months, and the light brightened in her eyes. Ben was not the only man who looked at her with admiring glance as she moved to meet him, but his was the only face she saw.

"That's right," he said, taking her hand in both his; "I've been waiting for you ever so long. I've no end to say to you, and I've taken second-class tickets so that we can have a quiet talk."

The rush of passengers was over, and the two were able to secure a compartment to themselves. Mary's heart was beating wildly; nor did it quiet itself when Ben began to unfold the long story, which soon resolved itself into the fact that he had had an offer much too good to be refused, if he would go out to Sydney.

When she understood him, the colour deepened in her cheeks and she looked up at him with despairing eyes. He was struck with her exceeding beauty, but with a strange pang he realised too that there was a subtle change in her which he had never before noticed.

"You are ill," he said abruptly, with a suddenness which startled her aching heart, already sore with misgiving.

"Oh no," she made answer, with a certain dignity. "I am very well; tell me more about yourself."

He was only too glad to talk, to pour out all his plans and hopes, but the one which was the centre of all he never mentioned—the boldest of wooers may well shrink from telling his story in a railway-carriage, when the train stops every five minutes to take in fresh passengers.

"Is this your station?" he asked, as he saw her gathering together her bag and umbrella. "Oh, I had so much to say to you, but suppose I must go home and tell my mother now. I didn't want to tell anyone until I had mentioned it to you."

Mary tried to smile in answer, but he did not give her time to speak.

"And you'll come by this train to-morrow, won't you? For there is something I want to say to you; but I think you know what it is, don't you, dear?"

She put her hand into his hard, rough fingers, and looked up at him with a timid, trustful expression which spoke a soul at peace with itself.

Just then the train stopped, and she got out, but he took her hand again, and said:

"To-morrow, as usual."

Then he watched her disappear among the crowd which shut her out from his sight. This is a very ordinary story, hence it cannot record that any thrill of warning ran through him; he was full of happiness and hope, and he never suspected that the crowd which closed in round her shut her out from his eyes for ever.

The next afternoon he was at the station half an hour before the appointed time, which seemed to him as if it would never come, and then when it did come he longed to go back to the interval of dreary waiting, for it brought no Mary.

Train after train came up and went on its way, but the familiar figure and the smiling face which he had seen in imagination a thousand times never appeared before his waking eyes.

The evening wore away into night, and he made his way home in silent discontent; but, with the morning, hope revived—a new day brought new chances, new certainty of meeting, and he faced his work like a man who knows that his happiness is sure, if delayed.

It was only on the evening of the third day that he broke down altogether.

"It is just like a woman," he muttered to himself bitterly. "She has got frightened at the notion of going so far, or perhaps she finds she does not care enough about me after all, and instead of speaking the truth bravely, she avoids me, and hides from me. It is just like a woman. Well, I'll think no more about her."

This mood lasted for a longer space of time than might have been expected. During a whole week he continued to persuade himself that he was callous upon the subject, but on the Saturday he left work early, and gave up his pretended stoicism.

"I must find her—I must find her!" his heart cried, and so he paced up and down the dreary streets near the station where she had alighted, and looked up with a wild longing that he might see her face at the window. He knew no other means of tracing her: to ask at the post-office for a Mary Brown, who lived with her Aunt Hester, could only arouse the smiles of the officials, and could avail him nothing. So he paced up and down the streets hoping by chance to find the one where she dwelt.

Twice he passed down it all unconscious, and the second time he paused. It was a very ordinary street of shabby houses, with a few children playing in the gutter and on the steps. The dull monotony was broken by a very ordinary sight—a shabby mourning-coach was waiting at one of the doors, and on the steps was a tall woman in black, whilst a little boy of ten years old was sobbing by her side. There was nothing uncommon or remarkable in the scene; but Ben paused to let them pass into the coach, and then, as the child lifted up his tear-stained face and burst into a fresh anguish of sobs, he turned quickly away with a man's impatience of a grief he can do nothing to relieve.

He could not guess the truth, or he would have fallen upon his knees in an agony of grief, which would have swallowed up all lesser sorrows.

The shabby little funeral passed away. He turned and looked after it, unconscious that it was bearing away all that was left of the hope and joy of his life.

A week later he sailed for Australia, with despair in his heart.

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THE CORPORATION OF THE

Scottish Provident Institution

AT THE 47TH ANNUAL MEETING (Sir WILLIAM JOHNSTON in the Chair) the Directors reported a satisfactory result of the year's business—the Proposals received, £1,170,615 : 10s., being somewhat above, while the amount accepted is somewhat under, those of last year.

New Assurances completed, £1,015,155; with Premiums, £35,274.

Income in Year, £688,920. Claims, £269,880.

THE CHAIRMAN referred to his early connection with the Office, of which he was one of the survivors of the original Board; and, as illustrating the advantage of assuring early, particularly on a scale of Terminable Premiums, and showing the prosperity of the Institution, he instanced his own Policy as one of those which had been doubled, while he had long ceased to pay Premiums.

He then called on MR. GEORGE M. PAUL, W.S., Convener of the Directors' Committee, to submit the amended Laws and Regulations.

MR. PAUL, in the course of a few general observations upon the proposed alterations on the Laws, said *it was to be kept in view that in a Mutual Life Office, where all the Members have a common interest in the funds, all ought also to share in the benefits to be derived under the more liberal conditions which it is proposed to introduce.* He stated also *that none of the proposed changes would affect in any degree the distinctive principles of the Institution, which had been preserved intact;* and he proceeded:—

The changes proposed have for their object the modifying, or abolishing where that can be done with safety, the conditions attaching to Policies, so as not only to diminish the risks of forfeiture, and secure a more certain provision for our families, but also to render the Policies more marketable, if requiring to be dealt with in that way. But even in this few changes of importance were found to be necessary, as almost all the restrictions which were at one time thought essential for the safety of Insurance Societies had been swept away by our predecessors so long ago as the year 1849.

I may state shortly what was done at that time. Upon one point the Meeting firmly put down its foot. It declined, under any circumstances, to recognise Policies which might be proved to have been obtained by fraud. In this we cordially concur, and we believe this meeting would have been very much taken by surprise had we come to it with a proposal that it should be a rule of our Constitution that Policies should be a good claim upon our Common Fund notwithstanding it could be proved that they had been obtained by fraud. Some recent writers, I know, have given it as their opinion that as cases of fraud are not of frequent occurrence they might be disregarded, with the view of rendering Policies absolutely indisputable. But, apart from all questions of morality and legality, it is not difficult to see that if it were to go out to the world that we agreed to allow ourselves to be cheated, there would soon be no scarcity of knaves ready to take advantage of our weakness.

The meeting then abolished the forfeiture attaching to Error in the Statements or Information furnished by the Assured on admission, as well as to death in a duel, or by the hands of justice, and even by suicide, unless it occurred within six months from the date of the Assurance. . . .

In carrying out these various improvements, as well as the relaxation in regard to foreign residence, *our predecessors were in advance of their time, and we have been reaping the benefit of their foresight; and the Directors now find there is really nothing of importance left for consideration unless as regards the clauses relating to* foreign residence *and to* non-payment of premiums. *On these points certain questions have presented themselves for their anxious attention.*

First, as regards residence abroad, *it will be borne in mind that the Institution does almost entirely a Home business, and that the most of us are permanently settled in this country, with no thought of taking up our abode in pestilential regions. For such persons, the maintenance of the penalty of forfeiture in case of transgression of the free limits really serves no good purpose, and any additional risk from its abolition may*

be safely disregarded. Having this in view, and looking to our own experience, as well as that of other Offices which had preceded us in this concession, we came to the conclusion that we might safely take a step further in advance, and dispense with the certificates formerly required, and allow the exemption from restriction after five years to act, so to say, automatically. We propose, therefore, to introduce a clause whereby a Policy having a surrender value shall, at the end of five years, become absolutely unchallengeable on the ground of transgression of the free limits, provided the assured has completed the age of thirty, and has not during the previous five years been beyond the free limits . . . further, that the Directors should be authorised, on such terms as shall appear to them in the circumstances to be equitable to issue Policies unchallengeable on the ground of foreign residence from the first, on being satisfied that there is no present intention or prospect of going abroad.

Then, with regard to the provision in case of non-payment of premiums. . . . *As the rule at present stands, if a premium is not paid within a calendar month the Policy is liable to forfeiture, and can be revived only on satisfactory evidence of health. If we looked to making profit by the lapsing of Policies this might be well and satisfactory. But that is not the object of a Mutual Association, and therefore we propose that it be made competent for the Directors to revive Policies, within a year after the month of grace, simply upon payment of the premium in arrear, along with a moderate fine, without the necessity of requiring evidence of health. . . . . The risk to be provided against is the possibility of a member being exposed to the loss of his assurance through accidental omission to pay his premium. And this, we believe, will be obviated by the long extension which we have practically made of the days of grace, coupled with the various notices sent out as reminders, not only of the first but also of the second anniversary of the premium becoming due.*

But the question remains—What relief should be afforded when a member unfortunately dies within the thirteen months without having revived his Policy? By the present law it stands forfeited, and the representatives are entitled only to its Surrender Value. The Directors have carefully considered how they could best meet such a case, and they have come to what I believe, in view of the new provision for reponement without evidence of health, to be the true logical conclusion. It is to extend to any such the benefit of the assumption that the omission to pay the premium may by possibility have been due to accidental oversight, and, in the case of Policies having a sufficient Surrender Value, to pay the sum assured in full to the representatives, under deduction only of the premium or premiums in arrear and the fine.

If, however, a member in default does not revive his Policy within the thirteen months, the conditional forfeiture becomes absolute. But we propose to retain for him the Surrender Value —in other words, the excess of what he has paid over the sum required to cover the risk already run by the Office—for five years after the premium became due; and to give him the option, if expressed within a month after the forfeiture became absolute, of having, instead of the value in cash, a Paid-up Policy for such sum as the Surrender Value would have purchased. In this case he can have no ground for complaint; for he will receive his fair estimated share of the common fund, and will, according to the practice of the Office, have received several Notices, reminding him of the position of his Policy. If the omission to pay is from inability to meet the premium, the Office is ready, when the title is free, to advance it on security of the Policy, and so enable him to maintain the provision in force for his family. . . .

With these changes I venture to say that no Office will be able to offer greater advantages in regard to the Conditions of Assurance; while the advantages inherent in the low premiums and high financial standing—our Assurance Fund exceeds £5,000,000—cannot fail to secure a continuance of the remarkable progress with which we have hitherto been favoured.

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		Twenty-one Payments.	Fourteen Payments.	Seven Payments.		
21	£1 16 3	£2 10 6	£3 4 11	£5 10 0	£33 0 1	21
22	1 16 9	2 11 0	3 5 9	5 11 0	33 5 10	22
23	1 17 2	2 11 6	3 6 5	5 12 1	33 11 2	23
24	1 17 7	2 12 1	3 6 11	5 13 1	33 16 5	24
25	1 18 0	2 12 6	3 7 3	5 14 0	34 2 0	25
26	1 18 6	2 13 0	3 7 10	5 14 11	34 8 2	26
27	1 19 2	2 13 6	3 8 7	5 15 11	34 16 1	27
28	1 19 11	2 14 1	3 9 5	5 17 1	35 4 9	28
29	2 0 8	2 14 8	3 10 3	5 18 6	35 14 1	29
*30	2 1 6	2 15 4	3 11 2	6 0 1	36 4 0	*30
31	2 2 6	2 16 2	3 12 1	6 1 10	36 14 6	31
32	2 3 5	2 17 1	3 13 2	6 3 8	37 5 5	32
33	2 4 6	2 18 0	3 14 4	6 5 8	37 17 2	33
34	2 5 7	2 19 0	3 15 7	6 7 9	38 9 7	34
35	2 6 10	3 0 2	3 16 11	6 10 0	39 2 9	35
36	2 8 2	3 1 5	3 18 4	6 12 5	39 16 11	36
37	2 9 8	3 2 9	3 19 11	6 15 0	40 12 4	37
38	2 11 3	3 4 3	4 1 7	6 17 9	41 8 7	38
39	2 12 11	3 5 9	4 3 4	7 0 7	42 5 4	39
†40	2 14 9	3 7 5	4 5 2	7 3 7	43 2 10	†40
41	2 16 8	3 9 2	4 7 2	7 6 8	44 0 11	41
42	2 18 8	3 11 1	4 9 3	7 9 11	44 19 9	42
43	3 0 11	3 13 1	4 11 5	7 13 3	45 19 3	43
44	3 3 3	3 15 3	4 13 10	7 16 9	46 19 7	44
45	3 5 9	3 17 6	4 16 4	8 0 7	48 0 8	45
46	3 8 5	4 0 0	4 19 1	8 4 6	49 2 8	46
47	3 11 5	4 2 8	5 2 1	8 8 8	50 5 8	47
48	3 14 8	4 5 8	5 5 4	8 13 2	51 9 7	48
49	3 18 1	4 8 9	5 8 9	8 17 11	52 14 1	49
50	4 1 7	4 12 1	5 12 4	9 2 10	53 19 3	50
51	4 5 6	4 15 5	5 16 1	9 7 11	55 4 5	51
52	4 9 5	4 18 10	5 19 11	9 13 1	56 9 0	52
53	4 13 5	5 2 5	6 3 11	9 18 3	57 12 11	53
54	4 17 8	5 6 3	6 8 0	10 3 5	58 17 2	54
55	5 1 11	5 10 2	6 12 1	10 8 6	60 0 8	55
56	5 6 4	......	6 14 9	10 13 7	61 3 8	56
57	5 10 11	......	6 18 8	10 18 8	62 6 5	57
58	5 15 9	......	7 2 9	11 3 10	63 9 4	58
59	6 1 0	......	7 7 3	11 9 0	64 12 11	59
60	6 6 7	......	7 12 0	11 14 3	65 16 9	60

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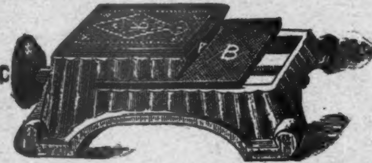

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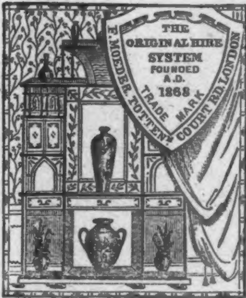

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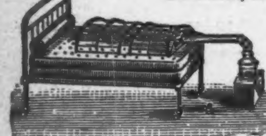

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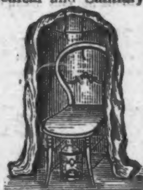

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